

HOTEL GRIFFOIL IS DESOLATE.

OF ITS ANCIENT GLORIES ONLY
"CERVIO, THE WAITER, LEFT."Famous Stopping Place for Cubans and
Resort of Writers, Sculptors and Painters
Falls in Ten Sad Days—Madame Died,
Then Murder Came and Soon the End.

The very last bit of fuel in the coal bins of the Hotel Griffioil at 19 West Ninth street was used up on Thursday night, and yesterday "Cervio, the Cuban negro waiter, sat alone looking out on the melting snow. "Cervio's hand was bandaged where his inflammatory rheumatism had swollen the finger joints and he shivered as he sat alone in the chill, deserted office. Louis Griffioil, who had tried unsuccessfully to keep the hotel going since Madame Marie, his mother, died last April was hiding from his creditors some place. Back in the dimly lighted dining room, with its old fashioned furnishings, the chairs were piled on the tables. The cigar case contained nothing but a drunken heap of empty boxes.

There were pictures on the walls of the office and corridor of men and women who were guests in the great days, brave names like Antonio Maceo, President Palma, Mlle. Amie, Andre Castaigne; but all the writers, sculptors and painters who for twenty-eight years have either lived at the hotel or dined, in the summer time, in the open air out on the rear porch among the potted plants are gone. "Cervio, who speaks so many languages that no one would venture a guess as to his nationality, alone remained. He has been there since he came from Cuba more than twenty years ago, and even though the Griffioil was closed for all time yesterday "Cervio could think of no place else to go.

"Mieu Looee he come back bimby, eh, eh," he said, again, and again, "eh?" said "Cervio" wistfully, and shivered.

There was a feeling akin to personal loss all over the artistic Washington Square neighborhood yesterday when word went abroad that Looee had given up the fight and had ignominiously fled when policemen from the Mercer street station had come to the hotel to arrest him for being months behind with his license money. Detective Fitzgerald would have got Looee, too, if Annie Holman, who was housekeeper at the Griffioil when Ninth street and Fifth avenue was not "too far down town," hadn't stood with arms akimbo at the foot of the red carpeted stairs and blocked the way long enough—

Well, when the detective and the three plain clothes men who were with him finally got by Annie and went up the stairs to search the house Looee wasn't to be found, and even "Cervio" hasn't seen him since. Annie Holman said, "May bien" when the detectives came downstairs empty-handed—she knows how long Annie has been at the Griffioil. Now has almost forgotten her English.

It is nearly thirty years since Mme. Marie Griffioil got hold of the two houses at 19-21 West Ninth street and opened the little hotel that later achieved the fame of being featured in short stories. In its heyday William M. Chase, Augustus St. Gaudens, Carroll Beckwith and other spending their days in the big barnlike Studio Building, around the block in West Tenth street, and when the noon hour happened along they gathered before the hotel, the great, the beautiful and the pink ink of the Griffioil, because the chicken was good and because the professional bohemians hadn't found the place as yet. Indeed, the professionals never found it, which is why for a long time, why Annie Holman had to block the stairs against the police.

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after the Hampton murder and suicide, and he became almost as shaky for some time before this. When Madame Marie grew too old to give personal attention to the house there was a rapid falling off in the quality and quantity of the clientele. Not so very long ago a heroic effort was made by the Griffioil management to revivify the house by paying a more or less famous Bohemian a salary to frequent the dining room and to bring as many of his near highbrows with him as possible. For some reason New York didn't flock to the professional geniuses sitting around on salary and nothing came of the scheme. It did more harm than good, inasmuch as some of the men who really did things became disgusted and avoided the place.

There was less and less money in the cash register and finally the police came to get Mieu Looee on complaint of the State Excise Board, to whom Looee had not paid anything since last May. Looee got away, as has been said, while the faithful Annie held the staircase, and the only thing left for the police to do was to gather in Dominick, the Italian head waiter. Dominick was taken over to the Jefferson market car at the end of the block, charged with serving liquor to the few remaining guests without a license. His hearing will come on Monday. Dominick was not to be seen yesterday. Jean Arcella, who has been a waiter in the hotel for years, came in in the afternoon and sat silently while "Cervio" fastened old papers over the windows to keep out the cold. Jean looked fairly comfortable in his heavy overcoat, but "Cervio," clad in a thin undershirt and his new buttoned shirt, neck, hobbled about rheumatically and shivered. The ladder was empty, there were no fires and the last bottle of the red wine was gone.

"To-day I order some coal to warm up."

"Last night I sleep here alone and, ah, it was cold," said "Cervio," but it is not likely that Mieu Looee will come back.

NOT FOR UNION SQUARE SITE.

Board of Estimate Committee Not Likely to Approve Court House Plan.

The Board of Estimate's special committee which was appointed to consider the recommendation of the Court House Commission that the new court house should face Union Square between Fourteenth and Seventeenth streets is not likely to endorse the commission's suggestion. The committee held a public hearing yesterday, and at the close of it President McGowan of the Board of Aldermen and Borough President Ahern said that they thought that as the estimate of the cost of the site was \$15,000 they would not be justified in making a report in favor of the commission's scheme.

Comptroller Metz, the third member of the special committee, said that he would have to think the matter over long and seriously before he would vote for an expenditure of \$15,000 for a site for a new court house. Mr. Metz was angry also because of the want of civic interest shown in what was generally conceded to be a greatly needed public improvement.

"For years," he said at the hearing, "we have heard demands for a new court house, yet when the Board of Estimate is trying to do something in the way of getting a new building and asking the advice of the Judges and the bar we find at this public hearing yesterday just the same persons on a real estate agent's list."

The four were divided into two factions: L. Napoleon Levy and H. Schmidt, speaking for property owners in the neighborhood before the Board of Estimate, and Judge Cohen, one of the members of the commission, and Austin G. Fox, representing the Board of Aldermen and Borough President Ahern.

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